

Skills *for* Success

SECOND EDITION - 2024

A collection of initiatives
supporting *Skills for Success* in
Quebec's English-language
post-secondary education sector.



Consortium of
English-language
CEGEPs, Colleges and
Universities of Quebec

Contents

Welcome!	3
About the Consortium	3
About this Booklet	4
About the Consortium's Inter-institutional <i>Skills for Success</i> Steering Committee	4
Skills Symposium	8
Themes	8
Lightning Talks	8
Agenda	9
Wifi	10
Initiatives	11
Accelerate Your Academic Job Search Seminar	12
Beat the Odds Academy	13
Collaborative Classroom Integration	14
Course-Integrated Mentorship: Empowering Careers through a Holistic Approach to Mentorship	15
Data-Driven Curriculum Innovation: A Model for Career-Ready Skills Integration in the Humanities	16
District 3 Alan Shepard Summer Residency	17
Double-blind Academic Peer Review for the Introductory Humanities Classroom: Experiential Learning and Writing Skills	18
Durable Skills Project	19
Emplois en régions	20
Exp-Labs Program	21
Experimental Community-Engaged Learning and Research (ExCELR)	22
Fine Arts Internship Awards	23
French Language Test Preparation in Virtual Reality	24
GPS French Course Project	25

Inclusive Mentorship Initiative	26
Innovative Co-op Internships – Partnership with Cree Nation of Chisasibi.....	27
J'apprends le français: linguistic mentorship for students working in the retail sector	28
Marianopolis Volunteer Network (MVN).....	29
Mentorat de langue française McGill-Montréal (MLFMM).....	30
Peer Tutoring Program.....	31
PhD Career Connect	32
SHIFT Internship Program	33
SkillXchange - FutureBound Skills Development Program	34
SPARK - Student-led Partnerships & Applied Real-world Knowledge	35
Social Science Mentorship Program	36
Students as Partners at McGill University	37
Take the Leap! Program for University Incubators.....	38
Transversal Competency Readiness Profile	39
Trauma Awareness Project	40
Vous êtes engagé! Institute: Internship Interview Preparation in French Program	41
Women in Engineering - Career Launch Experience (WIE-CLE).....	42

Welcome!

Welcome to the **2024 Skills Symposium** hosted jointly by the Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec and the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning, Concordia University.

About the Consortium

The Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec is an alliance of nine post-secondary institutions in Quebec: Bishop's University, Champlain Regional College, Concordia University, Dawson College, Heritage College, John Abbott College, Marianopolis College, McGill University and Vanier College.

Funded by the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise with the support of Bishop's University, the Consortium is mandated to strengthen research and inter-institutional capacity related to the retention, employment, and success of English-speaking graduates from post-secondary institutions in Quebec.

The Consortium has partnered with Concordia University's Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning to help operationalize its mandate; to create opportunities that bring key people together from all nine Consortium institutions to share, foster relationships, and identify areas for potential collaboration to advance students' skills for success.

To learn more about the Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec, visit www.consortiumquebec.ca

To learn more about Concordia University's Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning, visit www.concordia.ca/provost/about/areas/innovation-teaching-learning.html

**Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
d'expression anglaise**

Québec



Consortium of
English-language
CEGEPs, Colleges and
Universities of Quebec



Concordia



About this Booklet

This ***Skills for Success Booklet*** (second edition) is a compilation of submissions from members of the Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec for the Skills Symposium 2024, which is part of a project focused on **Skills for Success in Quebec's English-language Post-secondary Education Sector**, established in partnership between the Consortium and Concordia University.

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in ENGLISH](#)



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About the Consortium's Inter-institutional *Skills for Success* Steering Committee

On November 9th, 2023, the Consortium collaborated with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning at Concordia University to host the first annual Skills Symposium.

One of the recommendations to emerge from that event was the establishment of an interinstitutional steering committee to oversee initiatives, exchange information, and provide strategic direction to the Consortium's work around the Skills for Success project.

We are grateful to the following individuals from across our English-language post-secondary network in Quebec for their valuable service on this committee which has generated increased and diversified submissions to, and participation in, the Skills Symposium 2024:

- Bassam Chiblak, Experiential Learning Coordinator in Arts, Bishop's University – Committee Co-Chair
- Jennifer Mancini, Advisor, Student Success Plan, Marianopolis College – Committee Co-Chair
- Chanel Bourdon, Coordinator, Promotion and Enhancement of the French Language, Concordia University
- Celine Cooper, Managing Director, Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges and Universities of Quebec
- Andrea Cooperberg, Pedagogical Counsellor, John Abbott College
- Max Jones, Director of Student Services, Dawson College
- Megan Marcoux, Skills Innovation Lead, Concordia University
- Kim McFadden, Career & Employment Advisor, Bishop's University
- Avery Rueb, Dean of Academic Development, Vanier College
- Catherine Talbot, Coordinator of Pedagogical and Institutional Development, Champlain - St. Lawrence
- Marion Vergues, Director, French Language Centre, McGill University
- Community Representative: Clea Corman, Organizational Development Lead, Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT)

On behalf of the Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges and Universities of Quebec, I'm delighted to welcome you to the **Skills Symposium 2024**.

Several years ago, the leaders of nine English colleges and universities set out to explore what they could do collectively to enhance the retention and employment of English-speaking graduates, further enabling them to contribute to Quebec's economy and society.

This led to the establishment of the Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges and Universities of Quebec which counts the following distinguished institutions among its membership —Bishop's University, Champlain Regional College, Concordia University, Dawson College, Heritage College, John Abbott College, Marianopolis College, McGill University, and Vanier College. This initiative is made possible with funding from the *Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise* (SRQEA).

The Consortium, in other words, is collaborative by design. The **Skills Symposium 2024** and the booklet you're about to read are informed by a key question: *What can we accomplish together that we can't accomplish alone?*

Building on exploratory conversations with many of you participating today, as well as events such as the 2023 **Unlocking Potential** conference organized jointly by the Consortium, the Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT) and the Regional Development Network (RDN), and – of course – the learning and takeaways from last year's Symposium, the **Skills Symposium 2024** centers educators, students and staff from Quebec's minority language higher education sector to spotlight initiatives happening within our institutions that have proven successful in supporting learners to develop their **Skills for Success**, and identify best practices, opportunities, gaps, areas for collaboration, and resource sharing.

This is a tumultuous time for post-secondary education in Canada. It is no secret that Quebec's minority language English colleges and universities are facing headwinds as they navigate a suite of policy reforms with implications for their financial stability and vitality, as well as rates of student success and graduation.

I still believe we have every reason to look to the future with optimism.

Our colleges and universities have too many talented people, strategic advantages, and community ties not to overcome the challenges we face.

This Skills Symposium is one example of what we can do when our sector comes together with purpose, to make clear the critical impact we have on our students and communities, the promotion of the French language and culture, Quebec's economy, society and international standing.

The initiatives in this booklet will be showcased at the Symposium and collect around the following six themes: French-second-language learning/French language training for the workforce in Quebec; Innovative collaborations that are: cross-sectoral; inter-institutional; and/or inter-regional; Career readiness and Work Integrated Learning (WIL); Impactful mentorship; Curricular integration and innovation and; Leveraging artificial intelligence (AI).

The Consortium's new inter-institutional *Skills for Success* steering committee has elevated the reach and impact of this Symposium, including increasing student participation. My thanks to committee co-chairs Jennifer Mancini of Marianopolis College and Bassam Chiblak of Bishop's University for their leadership, and to all members for their valuable time and input.

Thank you also to Sandra Gabriele, Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning at Concordia University for putting the weight of her office behind this Symposium. A special word of gratitude to Megan Marcoux who has been a driving force behind the Consortium's *Skills for Success* project since the very beginning, and Claire Elissalde for her broad ranging support which includes editing, designing and producing the booklet you are currently reading. Thank you to Marie Lamensch for her support with registration and French language review.

We are grateful, as always, to the SRQEA for their financial support.

Most importantly, thanks to you all for your presence, collaboration and engagement.

Let's do big things together.

Celine Cooper

Managing Director

Consortium of English Language CEGEPS, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this year's Skills Symposium, an inspiring event that embodies the spirit of collaboration and innovation in education.

This partnership between the Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges and Universities of Quebec and Concordia University underscores a shared commitment to equipping our students for life after graduation. At Concordia, we take this responsibility seriously, recognizing the importance of creating the milieu that will allow our graduates to thrive socially, economically, and professionally—both in Quebec and beyond.

Since 2019, Concordia has been ranked as a top university in North America under 50 years old. We are proud of this recognition, which reflects the quality of our programs and our ability to attract a diverse community of learners, including anglophones, francophones, and international students. While Concordia serves a global population, our roots are firmly planted in Quebec, with nearly 70% of our students coming from this province.

Our role as educators and institutions—whether in colleges, CEGEPs, or universities—is a privileged one. We have the unique opportunity to shape the formative years of our learners' lives, offering them the tools, skills, and perspectives to navigate a rapidly evolving world. Though our time with them may be brief, it is a critical period that lays the foundation for their future impact on their communities and beyond.

Today's world demands that we think boldly and creatively, leveraging the abundance of resources, expertise, and vision within our network. This event is a testament to what we can achieve together: a collaborative approach to addressing the needs of English-speaking students and beyond, fostering the immense potential of all our learners, and equipping them to be catalysts for change in society.

In short, we have much to celebrate—and even more to accomplish. Today, I encourage you to embrace the opportunities for networking, collaboration, and action-planning. Let's build momentum, explore next steps, and deepen our shared commitment to preparing our students for a dynamic and diverse world.

Thank you for your dedication to this vital work. I look forward to seeing the energy, creativity, and collaboration that this event will inspire as we continue to support our learners and the bright futures they will create.

Warm regards,

Dr. Sandra Gabriele

Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching and Learning
Concordia University

Skills Symposium

November 25, 2024

This day-long event aims to bring together the nine English-language CEGEPs, colleges and universities within the Consortium network to:

- foster stronger relationships;
- highlight initiatives happening within Consortium-member institutions that have proven successful in supporting students to develop their Skills for Success;
- identify best practices, opportunities, gaps, areas for collaboration, and resource sharing.

Themes

Leading up to the *2024 Skills Symposium*, Consortium members have been invited to submit initiatives that speak to one or more of following six skills-focused themes:

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Impactful Mentorship

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Innovative Collaborations that are:
Cross-Sectoral; Inter-Institutional;
and/or Inter-Regional

French-Second-Language Learning,
French Language Training for the
Workforce in Quebec

Leveraging Artificial
Intelligence (AI)

Lightning Talks

During the morning of the *Skills Symposium*, a selection of Consortium members will give *Lightning Talks* on their submitted initiatives. These short, thought-provoking presentations are designed to share insight and impact, as well as spark conversation and possible collaboration.

Agenda

Time	Activity
8:00 - 9:00AM	Registration & Breakfast
9:00 - 9:30AM	Words of Welcome Celine Cooper, Managing Director, Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec Dr. Sandra Gabriele, Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching & Learning, Concordia University Overview of the Consortium & Takeaways from Skills Symposium 2023 Celine Cooper, Managing Director, Consortium of English-language CEGEPs, Colleges, and Universities of Quebec Megan Marcoux, Skills Innovation Lead, Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovation in Teaching & Learning, Concordia University
9:30 - 11:00AM	Lightning Talks Round #1 1. Data-Driven Curriculum Innovation: A Model for Career-Ready Skills Integration in the Humanities – <i>André Gagné, Julie Johnston & Ying Li (Concordia University)</i> 2. Collaborative Classroom Integration – <i>Charles Gedeon (Concordia University)</i> 3. ExCELR (Experimental Community-Engaged Learning and Research) – <i>Olivia Shan (McGill University)</i> 4. SkillXchange, FutureBound Skills Development Program – <i>Andrea Taylor & Pierre Foret (Concordia University)</i> 5. Social Science Mentorship Program – <i>Jennifer Dickson (Marianopolis College)</i> 6. Peer Tutoring Program – <i>Patrick Bennett & Anna Marczewska (Dawson College)</i> 7. Course-Integrated Mentorship: Empowering Careers through a Wholistic Approach to Mentorship – <i>Salvatore Costanzo & Aniklet Zefi (Concordia University)</i> 8. Durable Skills Project – <i>Avery Rueb (Vanier College)</i>
11:00 - 11:15AM	Coffee Break

11:15 - 12:30PM	Lightning Talks Round #2 1. French Language Test Preparation in Virtual Reality – <i>Samantha Morley (Champlain Regional College, Saint-Lambert)</i> 2. Mentorat de langue française McGill-Montréal (MLFMM) – <i>Julie Sénat & Jesse Smith (McGill University)</i> 3. J'apprends le français : Linguistic mentorship for students working in the retail sector – <i>Clément Hossaert & Marie Membrado (Chambre de commerce du Montreal) & Nathanaël Black (Concordia University)</i> 4. Trauma Awareness Project – <i>Mélanie Letendre Jauniaux (Bishops University)</i> 5. Student-Driven Partnerships: Building Career Skills – <i>Olivier Pontbriand & Bassam Chiblak (Bishops University)</i> 6. Innovative Co-op Internships: Partnership with Cree Nation of Chisasibi – <i>Cherine Zananiri & Nadia Mazzaferro (Concordia University)</i>
12:30 - 2:00PM	LUNCH
2:00 - 4:15PM	Facilitated Discussion and Action Planning
4:15 - 4:30PM	Closing Remarks John McMahon, Sous-ministre adjoint, Secrétariat aux relations avec les québécois d'expression anglaise (SRQEA) – Ministère des Finances du Québec
4:30 - 6:00PM	Networking Cocktail

Wifi

To access the guest Wi-Fi at Concordia, use the following credentials. Please note that registration will be required - further [instructions can be found here](#).

- **WIFI NETWORK** = **ConcordiaGuest**
- **ACCESS CODE** = **WAC-skill24**



Initiatives

Accelerate Your Academic Job Search Seminar

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

For PhDs and postdocs who thrive in their collaborations with colleagues, an academic job search can be isolating. “Accelerate your Academic Job Search” is a seminar at McGill University, Career Planning Service created for PhDs and postdocs seeking full-time academic positions. Now in its second year, this program increases the career readiness of participants through a cohort model that fosters accountability and peer support as participants draft an academic job application package. Participants can develop their pedagogical skills by sharing resources and leading discussions, creating a dynamic in which more experienced PhDs and postdocs informally mentor those newer to the academic job market. For six weeks, participants meet weekly to discuss key elements to the academic job application and interview process including CVs, research statements, and teaching demonstrations. While many academic programs have excellent discipline-specific resources on academic jobs, Accelerate provides an interdisciplinary space for early career researchers to build a supportive community with fellow job seekers, free from competition.

TARGET AUDIENCE: PhDs and postdocs seeking academic jobs

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

Accelerate is a program that is accessible in terms of replication at other institutions as it does not require external funding to run. Its main resource is staff time in terms of the administration and facilitation of the program. It is easily adaptable to other institutions.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Impactful mentorship

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

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Beat the Odds Academy

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Beat the Odds (BTO) is a career-readiness program co-created by and for students in equity groups. It removes barriers to employment for historically underserved students by actively placing them into paid, flexible work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities which empower students to expand their professional network, gain essential employability skills, and access support and mentorship. (More details on the BTO program can be found in the 2023 Skills for Success booklet.)

BTO has two phases: (1) The Academy, a pre-internship training program, and (2) the WIL experience, a bespoke internship built around the student's needs.

The Beat the Odds Academy consists of 10 hours of pre-internship training that sets students up for success and primes them for the realities of the second phase of BTO, their Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) experience. Through this program, students engage in a variety of targeted training and reflective activities that develop essential workplace skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and time management. They also participate in interactive workshops and self-assessment exercises that build self-awareness and enhance their ability to adapt to professional environments. This comprehensive preparation ensures students are confident and ready to thrive in their internships. Over the past few years, BTO has integrated generative AI to enhance support for students during the Academy. A custom GPT model reviews student reflections and provides detailed feedback to enrich their learning experience. This use of AI increases the capacity of the BTO team to provide tailored support to students in the program.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Equity-deserving undergraduate students from all academic disciplines

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: RBC Future Launch until April 2025, FUSION until April 2026

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

Creating flexible experiential learning helps PSEs better serve an increasingly diverse student population and demonstrate the value of an educational pursuit by providing insight into possible directions for the future. Also, leveraging of AI tools helps increase staff capacity to effectively support students in the program.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Impactful mentorship

Leveraging Artificial
Intelligence (AI)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

CONTACT

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<https://www.concordia.ca/academics/experiential-learning/partners/beat-the-odds.html>

Collaborative Classroom Integration

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Modern digital tools, and their heavy focus on collaboration, provide a unique opportunity for curricular integration. By embedding these tools directly into the classroom environment and centralizing all activity to those platforms, instructors can simulate environments more like those in workplaces where collaboration happens both synchronously and asynchronously. Productivity tools are also biased to action and insight rather than grading. This means they are able to greatly reduce feedback loops between students and instructors. Whiteboards in particular, like FigJam, have AI features such as automatic summarization and sticky note categorization that facilitate an instructor's ability to stimulate deeper interactions in the classroom and iterate the class more rapidly based on student input. Integrating work tools using this approach transforms the classroom into an interactive, open studio where both students and instructors collaborate dynamically. Initially created for design courses, this method can scale across disciplines by dissecting existing curriculum materials and converting them into activities that mimic professional deliverables.

The integration of real-world skills with learning objectives supports the creation of more adaptable learning environments where instructors work with students directly to continuously improve the course while deepening student engagement and connecting classroom lessons to practical skills.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Students who engage in the program, instructors, and external clients

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

This approach can be expanded to other subjects by adapting collaboration and real-world tasks to fit each discipline. In humanities, students can work together on research projects or critical analyses using digital tools that foster discussion and peer feedback. In STEM fields, these platforms can enable collaborative problem-solving or data analysis, mirroring real scientific research. For business and economics, students can simulate project management or financial planning. Arts disciplines can use these tools to collaborate on creative works. By integrating AI-driven feedback and professional-style activities, this method enhances engagement and deepens learning across various fields of study.

THEMES

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Leveraging Artificial
Intelligence (AI)

CONTACT

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Course-Integrated Mentorship: Empowering Careers through a Holistic Approach to Mentorship

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

This initiative focuses on intentionally integrating mentorship practices into every stage of the teaching and learning process. This starts with hiring instructors who have professional experience and a proven track record as mentors. Intentional instructional design helps ensure that mentorship permeates course activities, from personalized feedback to the introduction of professional networks. By fostering student-instructor relationships and facilitating career-oriented dialogue, adult learners are empowered to build skills and confidence not only in their content area but also in navigating their future career paths.

TARGET AUDIENCE: The target audience is adult learners in the continuing education context, but the initiative requires many other stakeholders to be successful. This includes instructors who act as mentors, academic coordinators and hiring managers who ensure alignment with mentorship goals, instructional designers who embed mentorship in the curriculum, industry-based mentors who provide real-world perspectives, and academic leaders who create supportive institutional frameworks.

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

There is strong potential for scalability across institutions. First, the approach to hiring and instructor preparation, which focuses on recruiting instructors with professional and mentorship experience, can be replicated by adopting standardized mentorship criteria across institutions. Pedagogical coaches and centers for teaching and learning could be equipped with this mentorship model to support instructors across contexts. Second, instructional design elements such as mentorship-driven assessments, personalized video feedback, and incorporating networking content can be easily integrated into a wide range of curricula. These elements are flexible and can be adapted to various content areas and learning objectives.

THEMES

Impactful mentorship

CONTACT

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Data-Driven Curriculum Innovation: A Model for Career-Ready Skills Integration in the Humanities

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

A collaborative initiative between the Office of the Provost and the Department of Theological Studies (TS), the project aims to equip students with career-ready skills by integrating practical skill-building activities into the TS undergraduate curriculum. Using a data-driven approach that includes student surveys, focus groups, and faculty-led curriculum mapping, the project seeks to foster both curriculum enhancement and a supportive departmental culture that together create a lasting impact.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Students, faculty and staff in the Department of Theological Studies

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Concordia's Department of Theological Studies

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

As a pilot, this initiative aspires to establish a sustainable model adaptable to other Humanities programs to prepare Humanities students for a wide range of career paths.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Leveraging Artificial
Intelligence (AI)

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District 3 Alan Shepard Summer Residency

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Traditional exam- and grade-based learning often imposes extrinsic pressure which can feel punitive rather than developmental. This “bad” pressure builds a fear of failure, hampering creativity and growth, focusing on short-term performance, lacking iterative feedback that helps solidify deep understanding.

In contrast, the Alan Shepard Summer Residency practices “good pressure” through client projects, where participants find the psychological safety to experiment and take risks, fail, and learn from mistakes. While the stakes are real, the environment is scaffolded with support, immediate feedback, and clear goals. This creates an opportunity for growth, pushing participants beyond comfort zones and fostering deep learning through action, ownership and accountability, reflection, and systemic thinking.

This 12-week, full-time paid program requires participants to practice aptitudes like quiet leadership, empathy, soft skills for effective teamwork, change management, and develop innovative and entrepreneurial mindsets. Transdisciplinary teams of residents solve pressing challenges for local organizations while maintaining a psychologically safe space for experimentation, failure, and growth through discomfort.

By intentionally balancing challenge and support, the recently refreshed program — co-developed with Pragmatics Studio — equips participants with resilience, confidence, and adaptability, preparing them to lead and innovate in complex professional environments where they will face both pressure and the need for strategic, thoughtful responses.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Graduating & recently graduated students

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Pragmatics Studio

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

We are currently refining a package to allow us to effectively export this program to partner institutions. Our grant application strategy has included export as a key activity that will be required to truly maximize the impact of the program.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Impactful mentorship

CONTACT

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Double-blind Academic Peer Review for the Introductory Humanities Classroom: Experiential Learning and Writing Skills

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

In my large humanities introductory section I used in-class experiential-learning “practicums” aimed collectively towards two evaluation items: a research proposal, and a “peer-reviewed” essay.

In the first set of practicums every student in the class was assigned a short text from a digitized medieval manuscript. In the practicums students transcribed lines from their poem, found secondary materials, translated and annotated passages, and then finally developed research proposals proceeding from these preliminary explorations. These proposals were then graded according to criteria based on those used by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to award Canada Graduate Scholarships.

In the second set of practicums each tutorial section became an “editorial board” charged with producing a “special issue” of student essays, working from anonymous “submissions” from the other tutorial sections. Each student wrote two reader’s reports submitted to the instructor for a grade. Editorial boards reviewed the reports, accepted essays with revisions, drafted a Call for Proposals (for students rejected from other tutorials), evaluated revisions and new submissions, and wrote their own introductions to the issues, which were finalized and circulated to the entire class. Students accepted into these special issues received a 10% bonus when their essays were finally evaluated by the instructor at the end of the semester. In a final practicum students used the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Readiness Competencies to articulate the professional skills and aspirations they had developed over the course of the semester.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Undergrad students studying in the Humanities

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The approach could be applied to any number of similar foundation classes with essay writing assessments.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

CONTACT

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Durable Skills Project

VANIER COLLEGE

In this project, Vanier Multimedia students are developing “durable skills” both inside and outside the classroom. These skills, including collaboration, time management, decision-making, and perseverance, are often underemphasized in current educational programs.

This project has two main components. First, in partnership with the Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT), an in-depth study is being conducted to identify the most crucial transversal skills required in the Multimedia industry, as well as the performance levels needed for internships and entry-level positions. The findings will guide the development of workshops and a multi-tiered mentoring system, incorporating AI-based support, to foster these skills. A second aim is to implement a recognized badge system to standardize the recognition of these skills across Quebec and Canada, building on the insights from the first phase. This initiative will create a circular economy for badges, benefiting both students and employers.

The project's outcomes will be thoroughly evaluated and disseminated through academic publications and conference presentations.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Cegeps, Universities, Industry

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: The Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT), Edu2

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The goal is to create a badging system for durable skills that all schools and industries recognize for admissions (post-secondary) and employment (job interviews, CVs, LinkedIn, etc.).

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Impactful mentorship

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

Leveraging Artificial
Intelligence (AI)

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Emplois en régions

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Emplois en régions is a project on regional immigration that involves PROMIS, Collectif des femmes immigrantes du Québec, and INICI. A team of advisors and a network of local partners support immigrants wishing to settle in one of Quebec's 15 administrative regions outside the Montreal Metropolitan Community. Services are free of charge for eligible participants (i.e., immigrants):

- Personalized support for regional integration and job search in Quebec
- Personalized support for business start-up or business takeover projects
- Development of a personal or family project to settle in the region, including help with setting up in the region.

Concordia University has just signed an agreement with Emplois en régions (PROMIS) to develop a French-language regionalization pilot project for international students.

TARGET AUDIENCE: The main target audience is immigrants to Quebec. At Concordia, the pilot project includes international graduate students in the Faculty of Engineering (Gina-Cody).

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: PROMIS

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

Should this pilot project be successful, we would like to extend this initiative to other institutions.

THEMES

French-Second-Language Learning, French Language Training for the Workforce in Quebec

Innovative Collaborations that are: Cross-Sectoral; Inter-Institutional; and/or Inter-Regional

CONTACT

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Exp-Labs Program

BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY

Exp-Labs stands for Experiential Learning and Practical Applications for Business Solutions. The program offers the Williams School of Business undergraduate students the opportunity to work with a real client within the framework of a course in a consulting applied project. Through this work-integrated learning (WIL) initiative, students apply theoretical knowledge to real-world business challenges, developing both communication and organizational skills as they collaborate with local partners. The majority of partners are from the Eastern Townships region, and the program helps strengthen relationships between students and local communities. The program plays a key role in recruiting the partners, facilitating connections with course leaders and students, as well as providing students with support and tools throughout the collaboration. The consulting applied projects range across business disciplines.

- Marketing students may conduct research, develop communication plans, or perform digital audits.
- Human Resources students may analyze compensation structures or design recruitment manuals
- Accounting students may create financial plans, rectify records and suggest tailored solutions.

By working on meaningful, impactful projects, students not only enhance their professional skills but also provide valuable contributions to the local business community. This hands-on experience allows them to tackle real-world problems and make a tangible difference for their partner organizations, ultimately preparing students to be more career-ready by equipping them with practical skills and professional experience.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Undergraduate students in the Williams School of Business programs

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: WSB professors, Bishop's Alumni Association, local community organizations, and local businesses

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

CONTACT

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Experimental Community-Engaged Learning and Research (ExCELR)

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

The ExCELR option of the Quebec Studies program in the Faculty of Arts allows students to gain a deeper understanding of Montreal and of Quebec overall outside of the McGill classroom. It provides an opportunity for students to apply knowledge from their courses to contribute to and make a positive impact on community organizations. ExCELR (Experimental Community-Engaged Learning and Research) acts as a bridge between academic theory and real-world experience, connecting the Quebec Studies program to the broader community.

Grounded in David Kolb's experiential learning model, ExCELR offers students hands-on learning opportunities to intern at Montreal-based community organizations. Paired with several in-class workshops, these semester-long internships allow students to develop crucial skills for their career readiness, while meeting local community needs and deepening their understanding of Quebec's diverse cultures and languages.

By connecting academic studies with Quebec's social landscape, ExCELR enriches McGill's EDI goals, positioning students as "agents of change" who help build a "just society" in line with human rights and UN Sustainable Development Goals.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Students who are interested in intersecting their academic studies with hands-on experience by interning with grass-roots Montreal programs; faculty members and program directors

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

ExCELR provides an excellent way to expand upon academic approaches, and by extension create more hands-on, experimental forms of learning for students.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

CONTACT

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Fine Arts Internship Awards

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

The Fine Arts Internship Awards offers an amount of \$5000 for selected students to undertake 150h internships in non-profit cultural organizations and projects. 45 internships are awarded annually across the Faculty of Fine Arts' 9 departments.

These awards allow students in either the second year of a graduate program or the third or fourth year of an undergraduate program to gain on-the-job experience. Students are encouraged to come up with an idea or project for an internship and approach a non-profit art organization of their choice to work with. Internships can take place at museums, cultural festivals, exhibition spaces, community theatres, artist-run centres, co-ops, libraries, etc. This program provides paid work-integrated learning experiences for students, while simultaneously allowing the Faculty of Fine Arts to develop and sustain relationships with partners across the city. By providing skilled and paid labour to these organization, this initiative contributes to the health of Quebec's cultural ecosystem.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Fine Arts Students at Concordia University

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Multiple non-profit cultural organizations and projects across the city of Montreal:

<https://www.concordia.ca/finearts/academics/experiential-learning/internship-opportunities.html>

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? MAYBE

This project is made possible by donor funds. The ability to offer paid internships while removing the financial burden from the host organizations is contingent on funding for the program.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

CONTACT

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<https://www.concordia.ca/finearts/academics/experiential-learning/apply-for-an-internship.html>

French Language Test Preparation in Virtual Reality

CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE - SAINT-LAMBERT

This project, situated in the Continuing Education department of College Champlain Saint-Lambert consists of a virtual reality-based training module and practice test which helps students prepare for the French language tests that are now a requirement of Law 14. Participants complete a short (approximately 90 minute) training module of the oral comprehension and oral production components. In this module, participants see how the sections of the test are structured; what type of questions, content, vocabulary, as well as how long they have to answer. They also learn strategies to help them succeed in the actual test. A practice test, which covers both the oral comprehension and production tests, can be done after the training module or independently. It simulates the testing environment and conditions in VR to help students prepare for both tests. This helps reduce the anxiety of the unknown, prepare students for the format of the tests, and allows students to gauge their preparedness.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Students in Continuing Education who must satisfy the Law 14 language requirements by writing one of the identified exams

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

Could be expanded to other components of the test, or other subjects.

THEMES

French-Second-Language
Learning, French Language
Training for the Workforce
in Quebec

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<https://champlainsaintlambert.ca/champlain-news/champlain-uses-vr-to-prepare-students-for-language-testing/>



Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies French Course Project

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) at McGill is running a program to offer French courses free of charge to select groups of Masters and doctoral students, in support of McGill's Policy on the Use and Quality of the French Language. This policy intends to implement measures to support students in acquiring command of the French language by the end of their studies. French proficiency is a distinct advantage for research collaborations with local partners, internships and mobility opportunities during the degree. A good command of French would also facilitate transition to the Quebec labour market after graduation.

The project began with doctoral FRQ award holders and has expanded to include Masters FRQ award holders, other doctoral student groups, and Masters non-thesis students who qualify for the Graduate Internship Program for Engineering and Computer Science (GRIPECS).

TARGET AUDIENCE: Graduate students

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: McGill's School of Continuing Studies

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

A greater number of graduate students could engage in the program if other resources (including funding) were available. The project could be implemented at other institutions if there is a demand by the student population.

THEMES

French-Second-Language Learning, French Language Training for the Workforce in Quebec

CONTACT

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Inclusive Mentorship Initiative

CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE – LENNOXVILLE

The Inclusive Mentorship Initiative program is an immersive French language mentoring program based in the Eastern Townships that pairs a French-speaking professional (aka mentor) with an English-speaking student (aka mentee) who wishes to practice and improve their French-language skills. Mentors and mentees come from a variety of professions and fields of study, including health and social services and education, administrative, scientific, and IT. The IMI program helps English-speaking Townshippers improve their French-language skills and be more confident in speaking French, thereby improving access to services, increasing employability, and enabling them to be more involved in their community.

TARGET AUDIENCE: English-speakers (students in this case) looking to practice and improve their French-language skills in order to integrate professionally and personally in Estrie, by increasing their employability and their network

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Champlain Regional College, CIUSSS-E, Bishop's University's French Department for continuing education

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? MAYBE

A province-wide linguistic mentoring initiative partnership is underway with PERT. Heather is available for consultation / support for institutions interested in launching a similar initiative.

THEMES

French-Second-Language Learning, French Language Training for the Workforce in Quebec

Impactful mentorship

Innovative Collaborations that are: Cross-Sectoral; Inter-Institutional; and/or Inter-Regional

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Innovative Co-op Internships – Partnership with Cree Nation of Chisasibi

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Innovative Co-op Internships – Partnership with Cree Nation of Chisasibi aims to create a dynamic partnership between Concordia University's Institute for Cooperative Learning and the Cree Nation of Chisasibi, fostering collaboration on special projects that celebrate and integrate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. This initiative invites Graduate Engineering Co-op students to apply their skills and creativity by working closely with community members, engaging in projects that address local objectives and challenges.

Through this initiative, students will gain hands-on experience while deepening their understanding of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and values. Graduate Engineering Co-op students focus on areas such as environmental sustainability, community development, and cultural preservation, which allows students to contribute meaningfully to projects that matter to the community.

By bridging academic learning with real-world application, the initiative not only supports the professional growth of students but also empowers Indigenous communities by providing access to fresh ideas and diverse skill sets. Together, we aim to build lasting relationships and create a shared vision for the future ensuring that both students and community members benefit from this enriching experience.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Graduate Engineering Co-op students

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: The Cree Nation of Chisasibi

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

This initiative can serve as a model for similar partnerships in different communities and across different disciplines leading to a full-time opportunity upon graduation. It could also be expanded to various levels of students (e.g., undergraduate).

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

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<https://www.concordia.ca/cunews/main/stories/2024/09/05/gina-cody-co-op-students-build-learn-and-connect-in-the-cree-nation-of-chisasibi.html>

J'apprends le français: linguistic mentorship for students working in the retail sector

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Since 2016, this innovative project has been pairing the retail industry with students in Montreal to strengthen the students' French language skills directly in the shops. Over 900 successful matches have been made to date!

- Free, tailor-made workshops for allophones in the retail sector
- Two hours of French lessons per week, directly in the workplace
- Immersive learning with active community support

TARGET AUDIENCE: Allophone retail workers (mentees) and university students (mentors)

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: The Montreal Chamber of Commerce (CCMM)

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? **MAYBE**

If the program were to scale up, there could be a collaboration with other chambers of commerce in the regions. A better recruitment strategy to hire student mentors could occur by involving other post-secondary institutions. Recruitment of mentors could perhaps also take place at the collegial level.

THEMES

French-Second-Language Learning, French Language Training for the Workforce in Quebec

Impactful mentorship

CONTACT

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Marianopolis Volunteer Network (MVN)

MARIANOPOLIS COLLEGE

The Marianopolis Volunteer Network (MVN) is an online database created in 2022 that contains volunteering opportunities throughout the Greater Montreal area. The spreadsheet, which contains more than 200 entries, is available on the Marianopolis Student Union (MSU) Congress website. It is maintained and updated continuously by the MSU Congress, and Marianopolis students and nonprofit organizations can submit a volunteering opportunity to be added to the spreadsheet. Entries have expanded to include Marianopolis student-led clubs that offer volunteering opportunities to students. Being divided into eight general categories (Healthcare, Eldercare, Youth Support, Community Centers, Shelters, Cultural and Immigration support, Food banks, and Other), the MVN lets students explore various fields they might be interested in and develop valuable skills.

Some of the initiatives MSU Congress has taken recently to improve the MVN include: finding research and internship opportunities for CEGEP students to expand it into a Marianopolis Opportunities Network and looking into the possibility of converting the spreadsheet into a website to make it more user-friendly and accessible.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Students, faculty, academic advisors, and counselors

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Marianopolis Student Union

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

This project has high potential for replication. Institutions could develop lists of opportunities personalized to their student body or could work collaboratively to make an extensive list of enriching opportunities in the Greater Montreal area.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

CONTACT

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Mentorat de langue française McGill-Montréal (MLFMM)

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

The McGill-Montreal French-Language Mentoring Project (MLFMM) is a pilot initiative integrated into a course at McGill University's Centre d'enseignement du français (CEF). Supported by the Centre de recherches interdisciplinaires en études montréalaises (CRIEM), the Programme d'études sur le Québec (PÉQ) and the Département des littératures de langues françaises, de traduction et de création (DLTC), the project aims to foster the cultural and linguistic integration of non-French-speaking students through exposure to different Montreal francophone environments.

The project is based on a mentoring formula in which French-speaking McGill students accompany French-as-a-second-language students in socio-cultural activities. By encouraging peer/mentor learning, French-second-language learners put their linguistic and theoretical knowledge into practice in real-life contexts, while discovering the local culture.

Benefits for learners of French include linguistic development, cultural enrichment and improved interpersonal skills. Particular attention is paid to developing critical thinking skills through encounters with Montreal community players. Thanks to this project, mentors benefit from leadership experience, enhanced communication skills and a rich professional experience transferable to other fields.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Francophone students and learners of French as a second language at McGill University

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Le Centre de recherches interdisciplinaires en études montréalaises (CRIEM), le Programme d'études sur le Québec (PÉQ) et le Département des littératures de langues françaises, de traduction et de création (DLTC) de l'Université McGill

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The project is being piloted in a class group of the CEF's advanced intermediate multi-section course. It could be piloted in several sections for the 2025-2026 academic year, which would require hiring more mentors. In addition, any university or college working in French and French language learning could join the project to expand it across institutions. These institutions could also replicate the program within their own institution.

THEMES

French-Second-Language Learning, French Language Training for the Workforce in Quebec

Impactful mentorship

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Peer Tutoring Program

DAWSON COLLEGE

When in doubt, model being a good student! This line is repeated throughout the training process for the peer tutors at Dawson College. An effective tutor is not simply a high achieving student (although this is a prerequisite), they are someone who shares their experience of having successfully navigated a course and CEGEP life in general with their tutee. The focus is not to replace the teacher and cover only course content, but to bolster the student who may be lacking in fundamentals of effective study skills as well as general soft skills. This program emphasizes the mentoring nature of the tutoring experience. The tutors themselves benefit from this relationship by reinforcing their own pre-established abilities and also by gaining professional experience within the program. The coordinators of the program invest time in sharing their own experiences as education professionals with the tutors. The program has expanded to include program specific professionals to guide the tutors.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Students

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

Program has grown within the college and the model could be used as an efficient program for other institutions.

THEMES

Impactful mentorship

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PhD Career Connect

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

PhD Career Connect is a first of its kind career preparedness program in Canada, established as a pilot project in 2022 at Concordia University. The initiative was inspired by the Accelerate to Industry program from North Carolina State University in the United States. The impetus behind the program was a recognition of the need to bridge the gap between academic training and the requirements of the professional world for doctoral students, namely providing an opportunity for them to sharpen skills not necessarily touched upon throughout their graduate tenure, for example, working in interdisciplinary teams and networking. An equally important additional objective of PhD Career Connect is to connect employers and doctoral students so that employers have an opportunity to see first-hand the skills and value that PhDs can bring to the workforce.

The program spans 12 weeks and covers various career development topics such as crafting a catchy elevator pitch, building a professional resume, establishing a professional presence on LinkedIn, and discovering job search strategies among other career-related topics. A unique aspect of PhD Career Connect is the project consulting component; doctoral students are placed in interdisciplinary teams and are given case studies which touch upon various themes that change annually. The themes in 2024 focused on marketing, sustainability, ethics, and business growth strategies.

The programming ends with a two-day networking conference where mentors and employers from various private industries, the government sector, research and not-for-profit sectors, as well as Higher Education participate in panel discussions. Panel discussion topics range from career trajectory after graduation, to the transferable skills utilized from their degree, as well as answering students' questions and providing support and encouragement about the next phase of their lives.

TARGET AUDIENCE: PhD students from all faculties and disciplines and postdocs

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? MAYBE

Other institutions could replicate or take inspiration from PhD Career Connect for their PhD students.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

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SHIFT Internship Program

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

The SHIFT Centre for Social Transformation supports collaborations between Concordians and their partners in community-led social transformation initiatives across Montreal. Partnerships are developed over multiple years and are grounded in trust and mutual understanding, with SHIFT mobilizing resources and connections in service of partner needs and priorities.

The SHIFT Internship Program facilitates paid experiential learning placements for Concordia students with existing grassroots and community organization partners. Alongside these work placements, a series of workshops are offered that provide opportunities for students to connect with one another and to reflect on their learning experiences.

Unlike internships that may prioritize student learning over community needs, this program is rooted in a non-extractive model. We ensure that internships contribute to the goals of community partners and that they are well-supported in their hosting experience through check-ins and collaborative problem-solving approaches when challenges arise. Many of SHIFT's partners are small, grassroots initiatives, making this structured support and longstanding trust-based relationships key to the program's success.

The SHIFT Internship Program is proud to have connected more than 160 students from across disciplines with Montreal's vibrant grassroots community since their start in Winter 2021, providing rich learning experiences for students while advancing the efforts of their community partners.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Concordia students across disciplines who are interested in social transformation and community work are welcome to apply to our internships. The program is particularly popular with international and out-of-province students as a grounded pathway for their integration into Montreal and Quebec's social sector and community landscape. Additionally, the program serves small, sometimes informal community organizations that are involved in socially transformative work and deeply embedded in local communities.

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Host organisations change every term. Only [SHIFT's partners](#) are eligible to apply to our program. Notable long-term partners and hosts include CultivAction Co-op, Brique par Brique, Black Healing Centre.

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The program's grounding in long-term partnerships, structured support for partner organizations, and its non-extractive and mutually beneficial approach can be adapted to various programs and contexts. Additionally, the program's capacity to integrate students from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds into local communities could be especially valuable for institutions looking to enhance opportunities for students to engage in local issues.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

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<https://www.concordia.ca/about/shift/funded-partners.html>

SkillXchange - FutureBound Skills Development Program

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

FutureBound is a skill development program for undergraduate students at Concordia University. Low-stakes, high-impact workshops help students develop the skills they need to be successful in university and the workplace of tomorrow. Over 100 workshops are offered per year, categorized under six core skill modules that are based on current workplace realities and designed around a set of learning outcomes, so students can be confident, adaptable, and forward-thinking in their academic and professional endeavors.

Moving forward, FutureBound will be building on recent successful initiatives to become a program that is more experiential, cohort-based, incentivized, and aligned with tomorrow's world of work.

SkillXchange is a newly revised, 5-week, cohort-based opportunity for students to design their own learning experience, pitch a business idea, or polish their public speaking skills for an upcoming presentation. Students receive tailored coaching from experts and then showcase their workshop, entrepreneurial pitch, or presentation to their cohort, their coaches, and the FutureBound team.

This paid experience allows students to apply and share their knowledge while they develop their public speaking, collaboration, adaptability, feedback, and facilitation skills. Students apply to one of three thematic streams - SkillXchange for Student Facilitators, SkillXchange for Entrepreneurial Thinkers, or SkillXchange for Storytellers, with all three streams deepening their learning and experience, and launching them from the program to further opportunities.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Undergraduate students

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: District 3 Centre for Innovation, Pragmatics Studio

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

This initiative began as an individualized program of students teaching students with 1-3 participants per year. It has now grown to become compensated, cohort-based, more structured, and with thematic options - our own journey with SkillXchange is evident of its ability to be scaled. The model can be replicated from the foundational concept of students teaching students and applied to other industries, fields, or foundational skill areas, as seen with SkillXchange's expansion into entrepreneurship education and public speaking.

Core qualities of the program are its high-quality facilitators who are both content experts and seasoned facilitators and mentors, well-designed and structured content created in collaboration, a highly supportive and incentivized learning environment, integration of peer-to-peer feedback, and accessible pathways for students to continue building what they started with partners or stakeholders.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Impactful mentorship

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

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<https://www.instagram.com/custudentexperience/>

SPARK - Student-led Partnerships & Applied Real-world Knowledge

BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY

SPARK (Student-led Partnerships & Applied Real-world Knowledge) is a student-led initiative pioneered through collaboration between Bishop's University's Experiential Learning Office and an academic society. This innovative project addresses the unique challenge faced by students in niche academic programs, where traditional internships and co-op opportunities are often limited or highly competitive.

By empowering students to initiate and manage industry partnerships, SPARK creates tailored experiential learning opportunities in fields where they are traditionally scarce. Students drive the outreach to sector-specific organizations, developing professional skills while building sustainable relations between their academic programs and potential employers.

The initiative's strength lies in its cross-sectoral approach, getting past traditional barriers between school departments, industries, and community organizations. By integrating academic knowledge with industry practices and community needs, SPARK creates a dynamic ecosystem where students can apply their knowledge to real-world challenges while building professional networks across multiple sectors.

TARGET AUDIENCE: University students, faculty members involved in skills development programs, industry professionals in sports management, student society leaders, niche academic programs.

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: External: Soccer-Estrie
Internal: Sports Studies Department, Experiential Learning Office, French Department, Bishop's University Sports Studies Society (Sposo)

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The framework's reliance on student initiative and faculty support makes it scalable across institutions. This student-driven model allows for rapid, flexible adaptation in response to changing industry landscapes and academic priorities. Other departments could use similar student societies to engage with industry partners while developing student skills sets.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

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Social Science Mentorship Program

MARIANOPOLIS COLLEGE

Marianopolis' Social Science Mentorship Program (SScMP) pairs students from any concentration with alumni studying or working in social science, business or law related fields. The program aims to cultivate lasting bonds between students and alumni and to provide students with guidance, insight, and skills that help them succeed as students, as professionals and as global citizens. Mentorship is recognized as an important contributor to personal and career development. Specifically, mentorship helps mentees develop a valuable set of skills and opportunities that include coaching, exposure, problem-solving skills, role modeling, counseling, and friendship, among others.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Social Science faculty and program coordinators in Colleges and CEGEPs, Academic Advisors, Career counsellors, Alumni relations professionals

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

This format of mentorship program relies heavily on the close collaboration of faculty, academic advisors, and alumni relations professionals. Any institution with close relations between these units, or that want to strengthen ties between these units, could replicate this model.

THEMES

Impactful mentorship

CONTACT

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Students as Partners at McGill University

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

The goal of the Students as Partners (SaP) program is to create partnerships between students and instructors, allowing them to share responsibility in shaping McGill's teaching and learning experiences and environments. The SaP program offers opportunities and resources for students and instructors to collaborate on projects addressing specific needs identified by course instructors. Through these partnership programs, undergraduate and graduate students gain agency to contribute their perspectives and ideas to the course design process, helping shape their own learning experiences.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Instructors as well as undergraduate and graduate students from the Faculties of Art, Management, Education, and Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: N/A

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED: YES

The Students as Partners framework has been implemented in several post-secondary institutions worldwide.

THEMES

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

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Take the Leap! Program for University Incubators

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

In collaboration with District 3 Innovation (D3) at Concordia University, Take the Leap! Make an Impact equips graduate student founders and other university innovators with essential skills to align personal purpose with business vision, a crucial element often missing in early-stage development. Designed to address the unique challenges faced by graduate entrepreneurs, this program helps founders clarify their goals, avoid burnout, and cultivate resilience while launching their ventures.

Through a six-week intensive course followed by monthly support sessions, participants engage in guided reflections, collaborative discussions, and personalized mentorship to create a “living legacy plan” that strengthens their leadership foundation. The program’s interdisciplinary approach combines purpose-driven practices with real-world insights to support sustainable growth.

Graduate founders leave the program equipped with practical strategies for aligning their innovations with personal values, enhancing resilience, and navigating uncertainty. This opportunity for District 3 Fellows offers a transformative journey to develop leadership skills that fuel not only their ventures but also their long-term personal and professional success.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Graduate Students, University Faculty, Administrators, and Staff, especially in the University Incubators

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: District 3 Innovation, CAOACAB Canada

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The program currently has plans to expand to a South African University Incubation Program to support graduate students development into entrepreneurship. This program can also be expanded and integrated in other post-secondary universities with incubators or entrepreneurship programs across Quebec and Canada.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Impactful mentorship

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

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Transversal Competency Readiness Profile

VANIER COLLEGE

When it comes to soft skills, it can be hard to know exactly what is expected. What do universities want from incoming students in terms of collaboration and time management? What do companies expect from interns for professionalism and networking? The Transversal Skills Readiness Profile (TSPR) aims to solve this problem in three steps.

Firstly, the TSPR team surveys universities and companies to identify the most crucial transversal competencies and their performance indicators. For example, should incoming university students be able to consistently use a task management system to help them submit 90% of their work on time?

Secondly, the TSPR team will compile an easily searchable table where students can explore skill expectations by industry or specific organization. Imagine being able to quickly identify the most important soft skills in the video game industry and comparing how Ubisoft and an independent game studio differ in their soft skills expectations.

Finally, the TSPR team will develop tools, including competency continua, to help students self-evaluate their current level and the best path to achieving mastery. The team will also work with schools to implement a badging system, allowing students to showcase their soft skills on CVs and LinkedIn.

This project is essential in preparing students with clear, validated pathways to meet the soft skill expectations of today's evolving academic and professional landscapes.

TARGET AUDIENCE: The primary target audience is secondary and post-secondary students, along with the institutions and companies invested in their skill development. Faculty members, industry leaders, and employers also engage in the project, contributing insights on the most essential transversal skills and helping to validate performance indicators. This collaborative approach ensures that the competencies align with real-world educational and professional expectations.

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Dawson College

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

By using a standardized set of transversal competencies and performance indicators, the Transversal Skills Readiness Profile provides a consistent framework that can be customized to different institutional contexts. The competency continua and digital badging system are highly adaptable tools, making it easy for institutions to implement them within their unique curricula. As a result, the TSPR can effectively support a wide range of programs and help students across the network meet clear, validated skill expectations.

THEMES

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Inter-Regional

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Trauma Awareness Project

BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY

In Québec's post-secondary institutions, adversity and trauma impact countless students, educators, and staff, yet the topic remains poorly understood. As a result, meaningful skill-building opportunities are lost and inadvertent retraumatization may occur. Trauma can create invisible barriers that affect interactions, decision-making, and the well-being of students, staff and faculty within academic settings. The Trauma Awareness Project (TAP) responds to this urgent need with a powerful, evidence-based training program developed for post-secondary institutions.

In 2022, TAP conducted a comprehensive needs assessment, revealing gaps in trauma awareness at Bishop's University. This led to the development of a grassroots, multi-disciplinary training program, deployed in 2023. Results showed an increased in knowledge, skills, and resilience among the staff, faculty and students who participated. In response to multiple requests for greater accessibility, TAP was translated into French and adapted for online delivery beginning in 2024. In 2025, TAP is expanding its reach by partnering with Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL) to foster more trauma-informed educational cultures among CEWIL members.

Future directions include offering this customizable training program to other Québec institutions looking to raise trauma awareness and ultimately foster connection and inclusion among all community members.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Any member of a Québec post-secondary community

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Bishop's University Community and Youth Research Lab

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The Trauma Awareness Project's training program is expanding into a customizable template that could be useful for other post-secondary institutions wishing to raise their community's level of trauma awareness.

THEMES

Curricular Integration
and Innovation

Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional

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Vous êtes engagé! Institute: Internship Interview Preparation in French Program

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Let's challenge the narrative that French language, culture and workplace readiness are in decline in Quebec. Concordia's Vous êtes engagé! Institute Interview Preparation in French Program provides students with a competitive edge in the job market. 2018 marked the launch of the Vous êtes engagé! Institute Interview Preparation in French Program, which was produced in collaboration with KnowledgeOne and le ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur (MES). This professional development training aims to support students as they navigate the interview process in a French context and improve their conversational skills to feel more confident in their ability to conduct an interview in French. It consists of 11 asynchronous modules (i.e. not live) and 3 synchronous online workshops (i.e. live), each of which focuses on a different component of the interview process in a French context. The professional development training starts with a Set Yourself Up for Success workshop which includes an overview of the syllabus and instructional resources, accessibility, the learning management system used and the requirements to complete. To date, over 1,000 students have completed this professional development training!

We invite our colleagues in the post-secondary education community to join us in continuing the conversation about how to prepare and support students for the realities of the job market today specifically as it relates to their French language skills.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Newly admitted students in the Institute for Co-operative Education who have no French capacity or beginner level (can hold a basic conversation)

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: KnowledgeOne, Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur (MES)

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The Vous êtes engagé! Institute Internship Interview Preparation in French Program could potentially be licensed under a Creative Commons which would allow other post-secondary institutions to adapt the content to fit their specific student needs. Alternatively, we invite our colleagues in the post-secondary community to reach out to us to discuss including their students in our offerings of the Vous êtes engagé! Institute Interview Preparation in French Program.

THEMES

**Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)**

**Curricular Integration
and Innovation**

**French-Second-Language
Learning, French Language
Training for the Workforce
in Quebec**

**Innovative Collaborations
that are: Cross-Sectoral;
Inter-Institutional; and/or
Inter-Regional**

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Women in Engineering - Career Launch Experience (WIE-CLE)

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

The Women in Engineering - Career Launch Experience (WIE-CLE) is an initiative designed to address gender disparities in engineering, influenced by stereotypes and workplace norms. It tackles key challenges faced by women and gender non-conforming individuals by providing students with on-site mentors who meet with them weekly and allowing students to dedicate 10% of their work hours to personal and professional development.

Informed by research on equity-focused Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) and Experiential Learning (EL), WIE-CLE recognizes the importance of avoiding patterns that drive women and gender non-conforming engineers away from technical roles. A primary focus is ensuring mentorship does not unintentionally steer participants into less valued, non-technical positions.

To address this, WIE-CLE offers unconscious bias and equity training for mentors. Recognizing the polarized views around Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the initiative is pivoting these trainings towards communication and team-building skills for engineers, covering in essence the same concepts but seem to encourage greater engagement and openness. Please reach out for more details on how WIE-CLE is empowering women and gender non-conforming students and working to bridge the gender gap in engineering—a field where gender representation remains significantly lower than in most other professions.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Engineers, Human Resources, Career Advisors, Mentorship program developers, Directors, WIL staff, EDI professionals

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS: Over 30 companies in Montreal where students engage in their internships

POTENTIAL TO BE SCALED UP/REPLICATED? YES

The goal is to have the idea of intentional mentorship to be spread far and wide. The program model can easily be replicated in other institutions.

THEMES

Career Readiness and
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Impactful mentorship

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<https://www.concordia.ca/academics/co-op/students/career-development/women-in-engineering-career-launch-experience.html>

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**Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
d'expression anglaise**

Québec

